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SUBJECT: ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND BENEFIT SHARING:  
IRELAND

REF: 04 STATE 269625

1. The information in paras below is based on Post's discussion of refel questions with Dr. Philip Buckley, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) national focal point for Ireland. Buckley has been the Director of the Heritage Policy Division in the Department of Environment and Local Government. This month, however, he will leave that post and cede his responsibility as Ireland's CBD focal point to Patrick Gernon in the National Parks and Wildlife Service (e-mail: [pgernon@duchas.ie](mailto:pgernon@duchas.ie); phone: 353-1-647-3000). Buckley observed that, generally, Ireland's procedures for access to genetic resources and benefit sharing are not well developed.

In most cases, approvals and permits are considered on a case-by-case basis after researchers/importers/exporters have personally corresponded with designated GOI points-of-contact.

#### Legislation and Regulation for Biological Resources

2. In Ireland, there is no specific law pertaining to the research and collection of biological resources. To obtain a permit to collect biological specimens, a researcher must contact the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), a national-level agency within the Department of the Environment and Local Government (address: 7 Ely Place, Dublin 2, Ireland; phone: 353-1-647-2300; e-mail: [natureconservation@environ.ie](mailto:natureconservation@environ.ie)). NPWS will provide a form to be filled out in connection with the inquirer's planned research and will determine whether to issue a permit on the basis of the information submitted. Terms and conditions addressing the concept of mutually agreed terms are currently not included in the research permit.

#### Movement of Biological Specimens

3. Permits are required to export and import species that are listed as protected under Ireland's Wildlife Acts of 1976 and 2000. Export/import permits can be obtained from the NPWS. (All bird species are protected.) If the species is not protected, there are no conditions on export or import other than the normal sanitary and phyto-sanitary requirements. The Department of Agriculture and Food (DAF) determines whether a sanitary/phytosanitary certificate is required for the import of animals and plants. The DAF point-of-contact is Tom Teehan (e-mail: [tom.teehan@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:tom.teehan@agriculture.gov.ie); fax: 353-1-661-6263). Prospective importers of plants must inform DAF as to the variety of plant, the botanical name, the amount of plant material to be imported, and the country of origin.

#### Mutually Agreed Terms and/or Use of Genetic Resources

4. There is no specific law relating to the negotiation of mutually agreed terms to and/or use of genetic resources. For wildlife, the responsible government agency is the NPWS. For plant resources, the responsible agency is the National Botanic Gardens (address: Glasnevin, Dublin 9; phone: 353-1-837-7596; e-mail: [frontdesk@appletree.ie](mailto:frontdesk@appletree.ie)). For agriculture and forestry, the responsible agency is the Department of Agriculture and Food (Kildare Street, Dublin 2; phone: 353-1-607-2000; website: [www.irlgov.ie/daff](http://www.irlgov.ie/daff)). These agencies focus primarily on conservation issues relating to genetic resources as opposed to their use, and thus they do not differentiate among uses for basic science, commercial development, and agricultural research.

#### Status of MAT and PIC in Host Country

5. In 2002, the GOI announced a National Biodiversity Plan, which included a commitment to prepare a national strategy on access to, and sharing of, genetic resources, including the development of MAT and PIC regulations and processes. Action on this national strategy has not commenced, however, due in part to uncertainty as to which Irish Cabinet Department would play the lead role. Three Departments -- the Department of the Environment and Local Government, the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment, and the Department of Agriculture and Food -- have stakes in the national strategy, but have not finalized inter-agency working arrangements. Moreover, the GOI has not identified

the national authority responsible for negotiating specific contracts for providing access to genetic resources for either research or commercialization of genetic resources. Similarly, the GOI has not designated a national authority as responsible for receiving financial benefits from ABS contracts.

#### General Information

16. The GOI has not prepared a text of general information for foreign researchers seeking to obtain research/collection/import/export permits. There is likewise no website dedicated to such information. Researchers seeking this information are advised to e-mail or call the points-of-contact cited above.

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